UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTION

Term:        Spring 2011
Instructor:  Sharon Pace
Course #:    THEO 4020/5020
Sections:    101 & 102        (HYBRID – 30%-79% online)
Course Title:    The Bible in the Jewish Community

Description:

This course examines the beliefs, culture, history and practices of the Jewish community by investigating the use and interpretation of the Bible/Torah. As the foundational heritage of the Jewish people, the Torah not only has preserved their faith, but it has also enabled them to retain their unique identity as a people who have lived among many nations for thousands of years. This Torah is comprised of two parts: the written Torah [Bible] and the oral Torah [including Mishnah, Gemara, and the Midrashim]. In this course, these traditions are studied within the context of the self-understanding of the Jewish people. Our studies will show that the development of the interpretation, usage, and impact of these texts has been formative for a people who have experienced profound loss, yet who have continued to find meaning and identity in their history, traditions, and faith. The course will emphasize the growth, development, and diversity of the traditions within Judaism and its peoples, all rooted in Torah and tradition.

As a third level theology course, one of the purposes of this class is not only to become well-acquainted with the key expressions of faith, tradition, practice, and culture of the Jewish people through the study of the Bible and Judaism’s torah-traditions, but also to consider the broader ideals of what it means to be fully human and to be a person of faith and commitment to ideals.

In addition, as this course also is included in Marquette’s core curriculum as a diversity class, it incorporates a study of Jews as a people. The historical and sociological experience of the Jews as a minority people in various lands throughout the globe provide a tableau to investigate Jews as a group who themselves have much diversity in culture and practice.